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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 002246

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/INS, CA/OCS AND DS/IP/SA  
STATE PLEASE PASS PEACE CORPS  
STATE ALSO PASS USAID - ANE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2013  
TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [EAID](#) [CASC](#) [PREL](#) [NP](#)  
SUBJECT: NEPAL: PEACE CORPS TRAINEES TO RETURN TO CAPITAL  
AFTER MAOIST THREAT

Classified By: DCM ROBERT K. BOGGS. REASON: 1.5 (B,D).

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SUMMARY  
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1. (C) Summary: Peace Corps Nepal has decided to transfer 30 trainees participating in a 12-week program in Butwal, in the south central district of Rupandehi, and five other volunteers in that area back to Kathmandu following threats of possible "action" from local Maoist cadres. The trainees will complete the remaining two weeks of their program in Kathmandu. Peace Corps has activated its warden network, alerted local authorities, and ordered all other volunteers to remain at their sites and within access to telephones. An Emergency Action Committee meeting has been called for the morning of November 18 to assess the situation. Peace Corps Nepal is gathering further information on the threat and will consult with the Embassy on further steps. End summary.

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MAOISTS THREATEN "ACTION"  
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2. (C) In the afternoon of November 17 the Peace Corps office in Kathmandu received word from its training director in Butwal, Rupandehi District (located approximately 265 km southwest of Kathmandu in the lowland Terai region) that local Maoist cadres had told three local Peace Corps contacts in the area that all Americans associated with the Peace Corps had four days in which to leave Rupandehi. (Note: Peace Corps has been conducting a 12-week training program for 30 new volunteers in Butwal since September 17. End note.) Should the Americans fail to heed the warning, an "announcement" would be posted on the Maoist website, and "action," including the possibility of "physical action," taken against them and those helping them. The Maoists reportedly also threatened the three Peace Corps contacts (who are not employees but prominent local individuals who had been "facilitating" the training, e.g., assisting Peace Corps find housing for the trainees in the community) and their families, and said they would call back at 4:00 p.m. local time to hear what Peace Corps had decided.

3. (C) The Maoists reportedly had contacted the three Nepali "facilitators" individually about one week earlier seeking information on the training program and its purpose. At that time, they had told the local Peace Corps contacts that they wanted to meet with the Nepali training director, but then modified their instructions on November 17 to demand that Peace Corps leave the community completely.

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PEACE CORPS STEPS  
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4. (C) On November 17 Peace Corps Nepal decided to pull back all 30 trainees and American staff, as well as one other volunteer stationed in Butwal and four other volunteers stationed in the adjoining district of Palpa, to Kathmandu immediately. The trainees and volunteers will leave Butwal on November 18, spend the night in Narayangadh, Chitwan District, and arrive in Kathmandu on November 19. Nepali administrative staff associated with the training program will remain behind one day to tie up loose ends and depart from Butwal on November 19. The trainees will complete their program (scheduled to end on December 9) in Kathmandu.

5. (C) Peace Corps Nepal has contacted the Chief District Officer (CDO) in Rupandehi, as well as the Regional Security Administrator in Pokhara, Kaski District, to alert them of the situation, and plans to contact the CDO in Palpa before COB November 17. As a precaution, Peace Corps has activated its warden system to advise all volunteers of the situation, and has upgraded its security assessment to the "stand fast" level, instructing all volunteers not in Rupandehi or Palpa District to remain at their sites, keeping a low profile and staying within easy access of a telephone. Peace Corps plans to inform other international volunteer agencies operating in Nepal of this new development.

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EAC MEETING  
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16. (C) The Embassy Emergency Action Committee will meet the morning of November 18 to review tripwires and to reassess the situation. The Embassy will inform the Department by septel of the outcome of that meeting.

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COMMENT  
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17. (C) Peace Corps has conducted two previous training programs in Butwal without incident. Since then, however, the Maoists' anti-American rhetoric has become increasingly shrill. There is no information that other volunteers in other locations have been similarly threatened. The Embassy and Peace Corps office will continue to monitor the situation closely to determine next steps.  
MALINOWSKI